

## **Tumblr Ficlets by ChunkMonk**

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**Summary:**

This is a space for ficlets I publish on my tumblr, that may never become full fledged stories, but are collected in one place.

My tumblr is [packupyourthingses](#)

I post my stories on there first, then here when I get around to it. Sometimes quickly, sometimes not lol

## 1. Will Byers Untitled Holiday Inspired Ficlet

Christmas Eve had finally come at last, and with it brought the beginnings of the first snowfall of the year, a crackling fire in the fireplace, and Joyce Byers and Jim Hopper passed out on the couch fast asleep, victims of a double shift and two many servings of eggnog.

The two were cuddled together, Joyce's head slumped onto his shoulder and his lolled back against the couch, hitting the wall. Normally Will would have laughed to see his Mom and Hopper in such a state, but there was something so peaceful about them, together and safe and glowing under a million twinkling lights from the tree, that all it did was make his heart feel three sizes bigger, like the Grinch.

Jonathan wasn't due to come home from college till the next day (if he made it at all), due to an unexpected blizzard on the east coast, and so far the holidays had felt subdued in his absence. There was a tree and a small collection of shiny gifts under it, but it just didn't feel the same. Perhaps Will was feeling the melancholy that so many people suffered from this time of year, or it was an after effect of a bit too much eggnog himself, leaving his emotions a bit closer to the surface than usual.

Hopper had stopped over earlier with a giant brick of inedible horror known as a "fruitcake" that some blue haired old lady had given the boys down at the station as a thank you for saving her cat from a tree, and a gallon of eggnog that they spiked with an unholy amount of rum. The two of them had sat at the kitchen table, poking at the fruitcake with matching looks of disgust that had morphed into matching trills of laughter as more and more eggnog was consumed.

Will had observed them from the living room as he cast anxious looks out the window and watched the clock. Mike was supposed to come over to exchange gifts and the longer he waited the higher the likelihood he wouldn't be able to make it at all, with the way the lazy flurries had morphed into a blustery driving snow.

By nine he still hadn't arrived, his Mom and Hopper had began to

snore lightly as 'It's A Wonderful Life' played on mute in the background, and Will had snuck enough cups of leftover eggnog for everything to feel a bit fuzzy in his brain, like someone had rewired the circuits in there and he didn't know whether he wanted to laugh or cry.

At nine forty-five, just when Will was about to give up, there was a soft knock on the door and he scrambled up, grabbing Mike's gift from the side table, and ran to answer it before it would wake his Mom. He opened the door and Mike was standing there, his bike laying against the porch and his hair and eyelashes speckled with glimmering snow.

"Mike, you biked here?!" Will whispered, stepping out a bit on to the porch and pulling the door halfway closed behind him. "You're insane! Why didn't your Mom or Dad drive you?"

Mike shook his head, spraying Will's sweatshirt with a fine mist. "They didn't want to. Said the weather was too bad and it could wait till tomorrow or the next day."

"So you risked your life to come here on your bike?"

Mike grinned, the same shit eating grin that lit up his features whenever he was incredibly proud of himself. "Sure did. I wasn't gonna miss exchanging presents on Christmas Eve. It's tradition."

In that moment, Will had never loved Mike Wheeler more. Sure he'd known he had feelings for him, ones that went strictly beyond friendship, since the sixth grade at least, but it was like feeling it all for the first time. Maybe it was the gesture or maybe it was the illegally consumed booze, but he knew with a clarity that he'd never possessed before, that he didn't just like Mike—he loved him. And that it was ok.

"Here you go." Mike reached into his jacket and pulled out a small, silver wrapped package and thrust it into his hands. "I hope you like it."

Will looked down at it, turning it over slowly in his hands. He was sure whatever it was, he would love it, especially since it came from

Mike.

"Thanks. This is for you." Will's voice was quiet as he handed over a blue wrapped gift. "It—it's not much but..."

"Stop. I'm sure it's great."

The two had exchanged gifts every Christmas Eve since they could remember. Neither could remember just how it had started, but it was just one of those things that was there's and there's alone. They'd exchanged gifts with Lucas and Dustin before—mostly comic books and small toys and stuff that didn't cost a lot of money—but only Mike and Will did this. It was special.

"Ready?"

"Ready?"

They both said at the same time, before giving each other a little nod and both tearing into their gifts, sending bits of wrapping paper all over the porch.

"These are awesome! Thank you!" Will cried out, clutching a box of professional oil pastels in his hands. They were the kind they sold at the art store downtown that cost more than his Mom was willing—or able—to pay. Just holding them made him feel like a real artist.

"Thought you might want a step up from crayons." Mike gave him a lopsided smile and held up his gift, a stack of assorted comic books. "Thanks Will, these look awesome."

Will wished he could have afforded to buy Mike something better than a stack of cheap comics, but Mike had always been grateful for whatever Will gave him, not once making him feel small.

"You're welcome." Will shivered, partly from the cold and partly from Mike's smile, though his cheeks felt like they were burning.

"You're cold." Mike frowned. "I should probably go. My parents will kill me if they saw I snuck out."

"Ok." Will stepped backwards, putting his hand on the doorknob,

when he saw it hanging above him in the doorway. It was the piece of plastic mistletoe that Jonathan had placed up there last year, when he'd used it to give Nancy a million kisses, making her laugh uncontrollably and making Will roll his eyes.

Mike didn't seem to notice Will noticing it, and in a decision that seemed great in his eggnog and love addled mind, he decided that giving Mike a kiss under the mistletoe would be the best thing he could ever do. He would go for the cheek, a zone that could be easily brushed off as friendly, and that would be that.

It was perfect.

Right up until Will lunged forward, eyes closed and aiming for Mike's cheek, and Mike shifted ever so slightly and...Will's lips collided smack into Mike's. He wanted to pull away quickly, but instead he was frozen—they both were—and one pair of shocked brown eyes met a pair of shocked hazel ones and time seemed to stop entirely.

"I-I am s-sorry." Will choked out, when common sense had overtaken him and he'd jumped back. The whole porch seemed to be spinning and he thumped his head back onto the door, closing his eyes to stop the sway.

It was dead silent except for the sound of the wind blowing and their mutual breathing, until Mike spoke.

"Will, open your eyes. It's ok."

"I really don't want to Mike."

"Will..."

"Maybe you should just go."

There was a sigh and then cold fingers pressed into Will's jaw. Will flinched, expecting a blow or something violent, but only to find a pair of cold lips meeting his. It was soft and lingered only slightly longer than the first kiss, but it was everything.

Mike Wheeler was kissing him. On the lips. On purpose. Will managed to open his eyes when he felt the warmth of Mike pulling

away.

“Merry Christmas Will.” Mike said, his eyes twinkling, and then he hopped off the porch and onto his bike, taking off into the night.

Will watched him go, staring at the tire tracks he’d left in the snow, at a complete loss for words.

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The End.

## 2. A Little Friendly Advice

The classroom was quiet after school hours except for the clanging coming from Mr. Clarke's room as he stood over the window, banging two erasers clean, letting the white clouds of dust float into the courtyard.

Will watched him for a minute before clearing his throat, letting him know he had company. "Mr. Clarke?" He asked, coming into the classroom, book bag dangling off his right shoulder.

"Will! What can I do you for?" He asked, walking back to his desk and shooting him a friendly smile. Out of all the teachers at Hawkins middle, he was the only one that didn't intimidate Will. The only one who ever listened. "Need to know more about interdimensional travel and all that fun stuff?"

Will blinked, momentarily confused before realizing that probably had something to do with the events of last year. "Uh no, I had something, uh, personal to ask."

He shifted his weight and felt the corner of what had to be his math book slam into his side.

"Is everything alright?" Mr. Clarke sat up straighter, going right into concerned teacher mode. "Is Troy bothering you again?"

Will shook his head. "No, though he's always bothering me. But it's not that...it's..." His fingers twisted around the strap of his bag until he could feel the circulation cut off. There was nothing for it really; though part of him would have rather died than ask a teacher, he had no other options.

"When did you first know you were gay?" He let out on a rush of breath, the words slamming into each other, and Mr. Clarke reeled back from the force of it. "Did you always know or.."

For the first time in, well, ever, Mr. Clarke's eyes were dark, his entire face stormy. "Will Byers is this some sort of joke? You know this isn't funny right?"

Will felt nauseous. "No! No it's not a joke...it's just....I think I could be too and I have no one to talk to about it." He admitted, closing his eyes against the shame building inside him. He'd never said these things out loud, and so far it wasn't going over very smoothly.

There was a moment of silence and then the creak of a chair before a soft "Will, I'm not really sure this is appropriate teacher-student discussion."

"I'm sorry. S-sorry." He backed up, slamming into a desk and almost upending it. "I didn't mean to...I will go..."

This was a bad idea. Horrible really, truly one for the record books of bad ideas, Will thought.

"Wait! Stop, it's ok." Mr. Clarke rose from behind his desk and gestured towards him. "Just, shut the door and take a seat. And if anyone asks if we had this conversation you say no, ok?"

"Alright."

Will closed the classroom door and then took a seat in the front row, the desk Lucas usually occupied, and placed his bag on the ground. The whole moment was surreal; if someone would have told him he would be asking his science teacher about human sexuality, he woulda laughed in their faces.

Mr. Clarke waited until he was settled and then spoke, his voice lower than usual. "First off, I'm not gay."

"But—"

"I'm bisexual." He continued. "I'm engaged to a woman, but I've dated both women and men in the past."

Will leaned forward. "So you're telling me you like both?"

"It's a little more nuanced than that, but basically that's the gist."

Immediately Will was flooded with hope like he'd never had before. Hope that maybe this wasn't the death sentence he'd imagined it to be. That maybe he too could live a normal life; he too could like girls,



date girls, and maybe even one day marry a girl and have a family. He'd never have to worry again, hear the bullies taunts, or feel the ice cold fear that someone would find out just how different he was.

"So it's possible then that I could like girls too?" Will asked, trying to keep the desperate hope from his voice.

Mr. Clarke's mouth pursed and did a series of funny contortions before he spoke again. "Well, sure, anything is possible. But do you like girls Will?"

"Well I don't like one now but..."

"Can you see yourself dating one? Kissing one?"

Will couldn't hold back the grimace. "Ugh."

Mr. Clarke chuckled and gave him a knowing look. "I think you might have your answer. That being said, it's not as black and white as the powers that be would have you believe. You may feel differently in a few years. Or you might not. Unlike science, when it comes to the human heart, there are no absolutes."

Will nodded. This whole thing was just so complicated. He wished he could have stayed oblivious to this the rest of his life; focusing all of his attention on action figures and comics and D&D like when he was just a kid.

Back when things were oh so simple.

"To answer your question though, I realized I liked boys as well as girls when I was about, ten or so. Started when I realized I liked my best friend a bit too much. Got real jealous when he told me how cute he thought Susie Collins was. Though I guess I always knew I was different in some way."

"I...I feel that way too...about a friend." Will looked down at the desk top. Someone had carved "science sucks" into it. "I like him a whole lot."

When Will looked back up he could tell that Mr. Clarke was mentally going through the rest of the group, trying to suss out who it could

be. Since Will was never seen in the company of anyone else, he had only three logical guesses.

“Mike?”

“Is it that obvious?”

Mr. Clarke tilted his head thoughtfully. “And Mike is?”

“Into girls.” Will sighed and was met with a look that spoke of similar heartache in the past.

“I’m not going to sugarcoat this Will. The kind life you’re going to lead, it’s not going to be easy. Some days it’s going to be downright difficult. Especially if you stay in Hawkins like I did. But it’s worth it in the end. Being true to yourself. It’s so worth it. Try and remember that, ok?”

“Ok, thanks Mr. Clarke.” Will said, reaching for his back pack. His Mom would be worried he was late, and he’d already taken up enough of the teacher’s time.

“You’re welcome, Will.”

His hand was on the doorknob to leave when Mr. Clarke called out for him.

“Oh, and one last thing. I would, uh, maybe not give up on Mike so quickly.”

“Wh–what do you mean?”

“Just that, I think you may have more of a chance than you think.” He smirked, before his features rearranged themselves into blank neutrality. “Goodnight Will. See you tomorrow.”

Will’s mind started to race, all happy, giddy thoughts. Was he saying what Will thought he was saying? Maybe he was able to pick up on those sorts of things, seeing as how he was a gay–er, bisexual–man as well. A type of detection ability?

A radar perhaps, Will thought.

“Goodnight Mr. Clarke. See you tomorrow.”

He biked all the way home, a hopeful smile on his face.

the end.

### 3. Jealous

The party was gathered in the basement, taking advantage of the fact that Mike's parents were out of town and Nancy was too busy sucking face with Jonathan to care what they did, or else Mike wouldn't have risked sneaking El into the house. As far as his parents knew, she was still some sort of escaped Russian spy, and running into her hanging out in their basement again could end badly for everyone.

Dustin, Lucas and him were gathered around the table, discussing ideas for the next campaign, while El and Will were curled up in the blanket fort, talking quietly and looking thick as thieves. If Mike didn't know any better he would say they'd known each other their whole lives and not the scant few months since their long overdue introduction.

Mike had expected—well he wasn't sure what he had expected to be honest—but when El and Will had finally met it was like a giant exhaling of breath. The two people who meant the most to him in all the world were finally in the same place at the same time, and they took to each other instantly. At first it had been cute; seeing El's face light up whenever she saw Will and watching as Will had someone who could truly understand all he'd been through.

Mike understood too, he was always there to listen, but there were just certain things that he would never fully understand. Not the way she could.

As time had marched and high school started, El and Will only got closer. Their immediate yet tentative friendship grew stronger and it was after the new year that Mike had started to feel...funny about things.

He couldn't explain why, or put into words how the sight of El and Will pressed close together, whispering or laughing, made him feel strange, or why he'd had the sudden and overwhelming urge to throw something every time he'd biked over to Will's to find El already there.

Mike wasn't stupid—he knew what jealousy was—but surely that

wasn't what the clawing, gnawing feeling in his stomach was? The same feeling that had only grown in intensity over the months until now, just looking back at the two of them, lost in their own world, was enough to make him spring out of his seat.

"I'm gonna go make us some popcorn." He stood abruptly, ignoring whatever Dustin had been in the middle of saying, and took off up the stairs.

Nancy was in the kitchen, applying olive oil to a tell tale red and purple splotch on her neck and Mike simply raised his brows and went about rummaging in the pantry.

"Shut up. Someone told me it helps them fade faster. It's weird I know but...I'm sick of turtle necks and my makeup isn't cutting it." She shrugged and snapped the cap back on the bottle. "So what are you guys up to down there?"

Mike tossed in a bag of his Mom's microwave popcorn and leaned up against the counter. "Uh, just hanging out. Coming up with another campaign..."

"Still playing that game?"

"Yes." Mike sniffed; honestly his sister could be such a snob sometimes.

"You're in high school now, it's a friday night... shouldn't you be out at a party or, I don't know....taking El out on a date?" She shot him a coy look and Mike wanted to throw something at her smug face. "I'm sure there's somewhere Hopper will let you take her that's safe."

"She's too busy with Will."

Nancy looked surprised and seemed to be searching for her words. "Will and El."

"Yea. They spend all their time together now. They are inseparable really." He grumbled.

"But....you are still dating her right?"

“Yea, as far as I know, unless she’d rather date Will.” It was out of his mouth before he could rethink the feeling. The bitter, bitter feeling.

Shit, he really was jealous wasn’t he? Why hadn’t he recognized it earlier?

Nancy just laughed and patted him gently on the shoulder. “Oh god, I...El and Will. I shouldn’t laugh, I know I shouldn’t but...” She gave him a look full of pity and, something he couldn’t name, and it was all Mike could do to not scream.

“Glad you think it’s so hilarious.”

The microwave beeped and Nancy took it as her cue to leave, once again patting him on the shoulder as she left. “Just, you need to talk to Will ok. Then you’ll see why the idea of them dating is...yeah.” Mike went back down to the basement, bowl of popcorn in his arms, and wondering just what the hell he was supposed to do with this new found epiphany.

Ok, so he was jealous. He supposed it shouldn’t have been as shocking as it was; El was his girlfriend, and even though they weren’t a typical couple by any means, and they didn’t see each other as much as other couples did, due to the fact that she was basically hiding from a bunch of very bad men, they were still an item and Mike was still a teenage boy.

Of course he would get jealous if another guy was deemed to be a threat.

But Will? Was Will a threat? The idea alone was enough to make him snort out loud, earning him curious looks from Dustin and Lucas as he stood there, stock still on the steps and staring at nothing in particular.

Of course Will wasn’t a threat. Will was his best friend and would never....No, he just wouldn’t. In fact Mike was pretty sure Will had never even liked a girl before. It just didn’t seem to matter to him at all, crushes and dating and all the things boys their age were into. He’s never talked about girls or looked at girls...he never....he...

That funny feeling was back and it was stronger than ever, roiling around in his stomach as he thought about Will with a proper girlfriend—holding her hand, kissing her—and he felt himself starting to break out into a sweat.

“You gonna bring that down here anytime soon or just continue to mime being a statue?” Dustin yelled. “The smell is driving me crazy.”

Will looked up at that, sending Mike a brilliant smile. Mike felt his heart flutter. “Yea bring some over here!”

And then it hit him.

Mike is jealous—he watched as El wraps a hand around Will’s wrist to help him stand up—but he’s not jealous because El’s spending so much time with Will; he’s gut churningly, mind numbingly jealous because Will is spending too much time with her. Because he...he liked Will.

Mike liked him the same way he likes girls. The same way he liked El.

And because Will didn’t like girls. Mike thought it was possible he could be....he could be....they both could be...

He dropped the bowl and popcorn spilled all over the floor.

Oh. God.

He is so fucking screwed.

## 4. No

“You don’t understand El, guys don’t like other guys like that.” Mike said, pressing mute on the remote.

El didn’t understand, that was true, but only because it made no sense. The two guys in the television program seemed to like each other. They smiled a lot at each other, laughed a lot together, and were the best of friends. Why couldn’t they get married?

“Why?”

“Because...just because.” Mike was visibly flustered and wouldn’t look at her.

“But why?”

“Because guys like girls and girls like guys. Those are the rules.”

Once again that made no sense to Eleven. “Who made these rules?”

Mike furrowed his brow. “I...I don’t know.”

“Then why do you follow them?”

“Because we just do, okay?”

There was a lot that she didn’t understand about life in general, seeing as how her formative years were spent in a lab, but out of everything she’d come to learn, this one made the least sense. Finding Mike had been one of the best things in her life, and even though they’d only dated briefly a few years ago, the idea that if she’d been born a boy, she would not have been allowed to like him, made her heart hurt.

“No.”

“No?”

“That’s not right. Those...rules...they are stupid.”



“El...”

Mike looked annoyed, but she wasn't having any of it. She was tired of having the world explained to her; she was ready to do her own explaining. Ready to make her own rules. “I will like who I want. Boy or girl. It's my decision. Same goes for Will.”

“Will? What does Will have to do with this?”

Eleven may have not known the rules, but that didn't mean she wasn't perceptive as hell. “Will likes boys.”

Mike's face grew red. “What?!” He sputtered. “No he doesn't.”

“Yes he does. He likes you.”

“Because we're friends El.”

“No...more than friends?” She tried the words out on her tongue, trying to remember the right phrase. “He likes you more than friends.”

Mike was positively crimson now. “Why would you say that? How could you even know that?”

“He looks at you the same way I used to. I can see it when,” She paused, thinking of how to say it. “When he thinks you can't see him.”

Mike swallowed hard; the sound was loud in the quiet room. “He does?”

She nodded.

“Oh.”

“Do you like Will more than friends?”

Mike shifted on the couch, staring off towards the TV, but not really looking at it. “I don't know.” He inhaled sharply. “May-maybe?”

Eleven grabbed his hand; it was warm and dry, and she gave it a

reassuring squeeze. They sat there like that the rest of the night, the TV on mute, just breathing deeply.

the end